Kintsugi

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at http://archiveofourown.org/works/6206995.

Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	Graphic Depictions Of Violence
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	Hannibal (TV)
Relationships:	Molly Graham/Will Graham, Will Graham/Hannibal Lecter
Characters:	Hannibal Lecter, Will Graham, Molly Graham
Additional Tags:	alternate endings, Alternate Universe, Choking, Strangulation, Strangling, First Kiss, Cheating, Death Wish, paincanon, Blood Kink, Frottage, Minor Character Death
Language:	English
Series:	Part 1 of Utopia
Stats:	Published: 2016-03-09 Words: 7,326 Chapters: 1/1

Kintsugi

by Destinyawakened, orphan_account

Summary

Booted feet hesitantly stopped at the door in front of Hannibal, lingering a moment, a pause where a breath might be taken, behind the wooden door, no peephole to tell the person inside who was there. Quiet as it was, there was no answer for a good solid minute, and then the door creaked open, leaving the barrel of a shotgun pointed at Hannibal, with a wolfish blue-eyed, scruffy Will Graham hoisting the butt of it up against his shoulder to level it.

Hello, Doctor Lecter.

Will's gaze wavered when the dots all connected, making those jumps most called unbelievable.

"Ding-dong, the dragon's dead ," Will sneered out, nostrils flaring with the anger that still coursed through him with the realization that Hannibal possessed the audacity…

Notes

Slightly more literary approach than we usually do, but we hope you enjoy it just the same.

Kill them all.

Do you crave change ?

Change. No. This was not about change. Not anymore.

The shore was still frozen, black tendrils forming across the thin ice where the water threatened to crack through. The landscape was still, the trees snow-laden and the ground virgin white. The only hint of warmth was the fading peach light but inky, blue darkness quickly followed.

Hannibal was just as still. Just as frozen.

Home: a place where one finds sanctuary and family.

Will knew better, yet here he was, porch light on and fireplace blazing. The smoke caught on Hannibal's tongue as he licked his lips and slowly tugged off his leather gloves as he made his way towards the over-sized log cabin.

With my hands .

Straightening his overcoat and smoothing back his hair, Hannibal silently climbed the stairs onto the porch, however, he had no reason to hide his presence. He wanted Will to see his face; to know *why* .

Bare knuckles rapped against the split pine of the front door. Hannibal tilted his chin up and clasped his hands in front, waiting. He briefly closed his eyes and took in the scents of *home* . Blood painted the air with strokes of iron and salt. As predicted, Will was alone.

He was always alone. Together.

I'm as alone as you are.

Booted feet hesitantly stopped at the door in front of Hannibal, lingering a moment, a pause where a breath might be taken, behind the wooden door, no peephole to tell the person inside who was there. Quiet as it was, there was no answer for a good solid minute, and then the door creaked open, leaving the barrel of a shotgun pointed at Hannibal, with a wolfish blue-eyed, scruffy Will Graham hoisting the butt of it up against his shoulder to level it.

Hello, Doctor Lecter.

Will's gaze wavered when the dots all connected, making those jumps most called unbelievable.

"Ding-dong, the dragon's *dead* ," Will sneered out, nostrils flaring with the anger that still coursed through him with the realization that Hannibal possessed the audacity…

But then again, it *was* Hannibal.

Elegance is more important than suffering.

A beat, and then a sigh escaped Will's lungs, but his fingers didn't inch off the trigger any less. Hannibal was out, and here, which only meant he'd escaped sometime after Will had left Baltimore and come home, just in time to stop the Dragon from killing his family – on Hannibal's orders. Will felt slighted, the irritation clear in his stance and in the glare that hadn't wavered.

"I should shoot you and let this whole thing be done with," Will said, the cadence of his voice more leveled out, now that he'd had a moment to reaffirm his grip on his gun, gaining control of the situation.

Guns lack intimacy.

How's the wife?

A smile tugged at Hannibal's sculptured lips and threatened to lift his alpine features that had grown pale and sharp with both the cold and the austerities of prison life, but the warmth never quite reached his eyes. Much like the warmth of this homely, log-cabin-life never quite got inside the heart of that wolf-blue gaze.

The gun petted his shoulder like the firm grip of an old friend – welcoming. Hannibal didn't flinch. How many times had they been here before; with Will, locked and loaded, aimed and ready to take the shot? How many times had Will lowered his gun?

History repeats itself. There is no escape.

He caught Will's sigh and the scent of him came rushing back. Under that horrendous aftershave, under the dogs, under her, under the smoke and whiskey and blood, there was him. Hannibal's lips parted just enough and he inhaled sharply. All those fading visions and shared moments stored so tenderly in his memory palace were triggered and refreshed, filled in and carefully repainted, for soon, that would be all he had.

Static scenes, fragmentary... like painted shards of glass.

"Hello, Will." Hannibal blinked once, slowly, but did not move.

Blood became his boy. The flecks of red were a stark contrast to wild, blue eyes. This image was worthy of a room all its own.

The brunet simply shook his head once, swallowing down the threat of emotion he had lately when he was around Hannibal; it was as dangerous as it was comforting. Having someone know the insides of your mind better than you might yourself was far from liberating. Will pressed the barrel into Hannibal's shoulder harder, pushing him just enough away from the door, and stepped out, kicking it closed behind himself.

The sun had set, the only gleam left in the sky was down behind trees now, and the glow of it lit up Hannibal's features in ways Will only ever remembered seeing in dreams. God-like and terrifying. Perfect.

"They will come here first to find you."

I'm not going to find you. I'm not going to look for you. I don't want to know where you are, or what you do. I don't want to think about you anymore.

Hannibal's face turned away, eyes closed, as his shoulder was rudely shoved. His torso twisted and leaned, before he took a smooth step back and then another. It was a moment before he turned his face back to meet the storm brewing in Will's gaze – a mix of rage and confusion.

Storms are evil.

Hannibal's own cat-like gaze softened, pools of blood catching flecks of amber in the dying light.

I've missed you. Like this. I will miss you. Like this. Words Hannibal would never admit because there was no need. Even with this gun perched between them, the silent conversation continued. Distance, time, space – none of these things had broken that line of contact and neither would death.

His gaze lowered slightly to watch the stark lines of Will's throat, painted in hues of blue as night fell. Blood looked black in the moonlight and his Adam's apple worked hard as he swallowed down all of the words he was hiding away – words that were scrawled over his tongue and down his skin, the smile over his hip being the exclamation point.

Hannibal stood perfectly poised as he was denied access to Will's home that was not his home.

“They will come,” Hannibal agreed, his words chased by plumes of cold, white breath. Yes, they would come, but they would not find him. Or Will.

Jack would know *why* Hannibal had come to Will’s home – why he would risk capture and his own life.

Live bait. Excites them to act.

You had him, Jack. He was beaten. Why didn't you kill him?

Maybe I need you to.

But how fast they came was questionable.

White teeth clamped shut behind thin lips, jaw tight as Will’s hand dropped, the gun down at his side now. Hannibal had always been his weakness, despite all he had done to Will. Chiyoh’s words often played through his mind when it came to the cannibal standing in front of him.

There are means of influence other than violence.

Actions spoke louder than words.

“Leave. Just go.”

How will you feel when I'm gone?

It would mean Hannibal’s freedom, and Will wouldn’t have to know where he was anymore. Free, yes, but Will would be, too.

However, it wouldn't be as simple as that; Hannibal would want to see the teacup come together – to see the life Will had made. That's why he was here now, but Will still had to try, after all.

We could disappear now. Tonight. Feed your dogs, leave a note…. We couldn't leave without you.

Hannibal's gaze tracked the gun as it was lowered, the fall of the muzzle dragging down the corners of his mouth with it. Disappointment settled around his shoulders, colder and heavier than the winter's night that chased its tail, but Will knew the violence with which those words were bitten out, through tense jaw and drawn lips, would land heavy enough – like bombs set to detonate over a thousand endings. He seemed to have no need to save himself.

History repeats. The mongoose that went under the house.

Hannibal placed his gloves in his pocket and stepped forward. Close, but not too close.

See.

"You think my leaving will grant you freedom?" Despite the curling warmth of his tone, Hannibal's words carried their own soft violence – little barbs shot out to snag at those heart-truths that Will pressed too close against his chest. His gaze roamed over Will's face, everything so familiar and, yet, so strange.

Will said nothing.

Because he was my friend. Because I wanted to run away with him.

"I will leave." *But not before ensuring you come with me – always a part of me. There is only one way this teacup will come together.* A slow and steady hand, still warm, rose to cup the

line of Will’s jaw, thumb petting slowly down the coarse hair that shadowed it now. Every little motion was a stroke of betrayal and grief against Will’s skin, but he didn’t move. He stood, stoically still, eyes keenly trained on Hannibal.

All of our endings can be found in our beginnings.

You and I have begun to blur.

They were almost completely shrouded in darkness now; the only light was the golden glow of home-not-home that spilled around Will’s shoulders. In the distance, a truck wailed down the lonely highway, its horn a broken discordant wail, crying in the night.

Hannibal gripped Will’s face, “Tell me, Will, when did you agree to waggle me like bait on a string for this Dragon of yours? When did Jack Crawford, fisher of men, convince you I could be trotted out like meat on a hook?”

Tell me Will, how long till you see you are and never will be Jack’s man.

Bringing up one hand, fingers still stained red from his fight with blood, Will gripped Hannibal's wrist and wrenched his face out of his fingers, a low snarl deep in his chest. Blood speckles on the side of his neck shone in the porch light as it flickered on just the same as it did every night when the sun finally set.

"He didn't," Will spat out, blood still pumping from his previous fight, Hannibal aggravating it where Will had tried to be calm. "It was *my* idea."

Blue eyes were brighter now as Will huffed, swallowing deftly the words he wanted to say – what he *should* be saying: that it was a setup and it was a way to get Hannibal out.

But now, after everything Will had just gone through? He didn't quite feel like Hannibal deserved those answers.

"Jack would have preferred to see you rot in there."

Hannibal didn't resist Will's rough touch as his hand was swiped away, but his fingers maintained the shape of Will's face as it had been cradled under his grip. Flakes of blood fell away with the motions of their hands, the scent catching fresh in Hannibal's flared nostrils. A memory stored.

Severe, beautiful, and timeless

Hannibal's head canted just so, his stony expression lifting with true warmth now. Cruel lips curling with silent mirth. He had all the answers he needed. "And he who holds the devil, hold him well... Jack would prefer me dead." They had time.

Conjoined. Just as Hannibal had been imprisoned, so had Will. Just as Hannibal was now free, so was Will.

When the moment comes, will you do what needs to be done?

Hannibal turned his back on Will and moved to look out over the porch, hands clasped behind his back. "Killing the great, red dragon. What did that feel like, Will?"

See.

Staring at Hannibal's back for a good, long moment, Will let the porch light flood across his broad shoulders, taking his own set of memories here and adding them to storage in his mind, in rooms locked away specifically for Hannibal – for them both. These were rooms he'd forgotten about in three years, but had so clearly come to his attention again in the last few weeks.

Being with Hannibal did that.

Afterimages of you in places you haven't been in years.

"Good," Will replied, "It felt good."

A confession. A *revelation* . The blood on his hands was a sign that he had taken delight in an act he once called ugly.

Hannibal spun on his back heel with a lazy grace to face Will again. It wasn't a confession as much as a revelation and Hannibal's gaze widened with the thrill of it. His mouth parted as he licked over his lower lip, hungry to taste the moment. The heavy wool of his overcoat rose and fell as he took in deep breaths and his index finger flickered with the urge to reach out and touch him again, but not to kill.

"Beautiful," he murmured almost inaudibly. His gaze now roamed with utter indiscretion, taking in Will's state of disheveled carnage - the results of his *gift* . His boy wore the gift of murder with pride.

"Good," Hannibal hummed. "Do you believe you can ever, truly, go home again?" Hannibal nodded to the windows over Will's shoulder.

Molly and Walter were gone, for now, and the home behind him was a shell of a place, warm without warmth. Much like Will, himself – a shell of man that Molly had thought she knew. Molly hadn't said it, but Will knew the look in her eyes when he told her go; that things would not be the same when they reunited again. Truth was, he wasn't expecting to reunite – he hadn't even expected to survive any of this.

And that was okay.

"We would try and make it work. We'd want to, Molly and I," Will started to say, watching Hannibal's movements, but kept his own hand tight around the gun while the other tapped on his thigh at his side. His jaw shifted, an uneasy smile flitting across his face, sadly, "But after what I've done, there is little to salvage. She'll see who I really am."

“She has always seen, Will.” The only person who shrouded themselves in thicker bands of denial was Will, himself. Indeed, he spun the lies so well that other people thought they could depend on him to be exactly what he wasn’t: Molly, Walter, Jack…

Hannibal’s gaze remained locked on Will’s, but he could see the flicker of movement at his thigh. He took another step forward.

“I came here to kill you, Will. To ensure you would always be with me, when I left.” One thin icicle dropping after another to reveal a Winter’s heart.

The confession was not surprising, but it still managed to send a chill up Will's spine, shoulders shrugging back to shake it off. He took a step back where Hannibal had taken one forward. One way or another, Will had known this day was not one he'd be seeing through to the end.

If he were lucky.

"What's stopping you this time?"

Is Hannibal in love with me?

“You know why, Will.”

But the agent needed the cannibal’s verbal affirmation. A rare gift.

“My compassion for you is inconvenient.”

How is your heart? Well pecked.

Hannibal watched fear slither up Will’s spine. The cannibal had expected to taste the buzz of adrenaline and fresh sweat on the air as he sucked his tongue. Instead he tasted exactly nothing. Resignation.

He sighed as he took another step forward, heel slowly lowering to toe. His hands hung loosely at his side and his face offered a faint expression of displeasure. The cold of night was beginning to bite at his skin. Hannibal set his shoulders back as he raised himself to his full height, chin tilted up.

"If you're partial to beef products, it's inconvenient to be compassionate towards a cow," Will quipped back. This time, he kept his ground, lifting his gaze to meet Hannibal's fully, only a step between them now, and he could almost feel Hannibal's warmth radiating off his broad chest.

"No greater love hath man than to lay down his life for a friend."

God is beyond measure in wanton malice.

Hannibal took the final step forward, pressing in on Will, chests almost touching. White clouds of breath meet in between, swirling into one and then – nothing. Pools of blood looked down, searching sea blue for all of the unspoken words.

Do you ache for him?

The agent could kick back, re-open the door to his old life. He could make room enough to lift the gun and let this whole thing be done with.

He could – he definitely could, and probably *should* have, but instead, Will let his gaze drift from Hannibal's eyes, to his mouth, then up again. Something about the air between them was familiar and, yet, tense all at once.

Dangerous.

"Is that what this is? Friendship?"

Nakama.

A perfect mirror. Hannibal’s gaze drifted down, just the same, then back again, before smiling a sad kind of smile and he brushed a smooth palm down Will’s face.

Could he daily feel a stab of hunger and find nourishment at the very sight of him?

This was a truth he had to feel.

His palm drifted down from Will’s cheek to clasp around the side of his throat, the pad of Hannibal’s thumb pressing over his pulse as he started to crush.

Extreme acts of cruelty require a high level of empathy. The next time you have an instinct to help someone, you might consider crushing them instead.

Hannibal's hand was strong around Will's neck, as he strained, trying to get out of the wrenching grip that the older man had on his throat. The shotgun dropped to the porch floor with a thunk, as Will started to struggle a little harder. Hannibal added another hand, circling it around his neck and effectively choking the life out of him, as Will gasped for breath, his hands reaching up to clasp around Hannibal's, but unable to push him off this time.

A palm landed against Hannibal's face instead, pushing, as Will tried to claw Hannibal’s eyes, but the cannibal effectively had him overpowered, a grip so tight that it had to be practiced and learned.

Of course it was.

As much as Will strained under Hannibal's grip – as much as he pushed and scratched, it meant nothing. He'd dropped the gun, his only hope here, if he'd had any in the first place.

Wade into the quiet of the stream.

Expression unchanged, Hannibal hooked a leg around Will's and kicked it out, toppling them both but never once loosening his grip. Will's pulse thundered under his fingers as though it was racing towards the finish – as if he couldn't get there fast enough.

As Hannibal straddled the agent with powerful thighs over lean hips, he slowly crushed the life out of him, urgent puffs of white slipped over pink lips – the final gasps of Will's essence were escaping and being dragged into Hannibal's lungs. The urge to dip and taste the end was nearly overpowering.

"When did you give up?" Hannibal's voice snapped over sharp teeth, seething.

Will had given up the day Hannibal gutted him and left him. He braved a good front, but he had gone through so much turmoil, emotionally, that even nine months at sea alone wasn't enough to prepare Will for Hannibal.

After everything he's done, can you still ignore the worst in him?

Nothing was ever enough. His only out after Muskrat Farms was to kick Hannibal from it completely, and get the older man to lock himself up. In doing so, giving Will the freedom and time he needed to mend all wounds, physically and mentally.

Or so he thought.

Not having to talk to, or see Hannibal had been the healthiest thing Will could do – he had moved on. He had married and adopted a family...

None of it was Hannibal – none of it was him. Will hated himself for wanting something that was truly awful for him, and yet, he could not live without Hannibal.

Can't live with him, can't live without him.

Gasping, Will clamped his teeth together, struggling, but lack of air and the stab wound in his chest from the Dragon (bleeding again where he'd been able to stave it off,) made it difficult to keep trying, but he did – *god* , he did – kicking and thrashing… but it was no use.

Hannibal's lips curled up in a hissing snarl as he saw the accusation in Will's gaze. Will had left Hannibal long before Hannibal's hand was forced to leave – and even then, against all rules and logic, he had let the agent live. He had even let him know exactly where he could always find him.

Will Graham was Hannibal's biggest mistake.

Hannibal had never abandoned Will. Indeed, his world had stayed perfectly still – frozen as it waited for the one and only moving component in it to turn and see his central part, but the threat and fear of ruin was so strong that it crippled Will away from facing who he was and from reaching for what he wanted.

It is easy to make a show of living, even when you're not. They both had that skill down to an art, but for all the motionless waiting, Will had never reached for Hannibal – just as he was failing to now.

Will's thrashing quieted beneath him and rough hands slackened, lungs only gasping on instinct.

Keeping one hand wrapped around Will's throat, choking him easily with his full-weight pressed over him, Hannibal's other hand reached down for the freshly bleeding wound, now soaking through Will's shirt, and pressed in there too.

“You admitted, yourself – you freed me. You knew I would come. Is this what you wanted? When did you give up? Answer me.” Hannibal’s voice growled beyond a snap to a roar. The beast had shed its skin.

"I died in your kitchen," Will whispered, rasped out through the hold Hannibal held on him. What he wanted, he knew he shouldn't and couldn't have – not in *this* life.

Will lied slack there, eyes meeting Hannibal's, liquid-blue to liquid-blood, as honesty seeped through his words; more honest than he had been with himself, or *anyone* , in years.

Growing pliant under Hannibal’s grip, Will’s wide, blue eyes desperately beseeched him for something he *still* could not name. A sublime act of submission in any other context. He offered up as much honesty as he could muster, but grief was not death.

Hannibal’s jaw flexed and stretched as the lies soured his tongue.

Softening his grip around Will’s throat, Hannibal kept a firm thumb pressed into the weeping chest wound, hot blood pulsing around his hand – just something to know that some part of Will was *alive* .

“And you think I sustained no exit wounds? Nothing died that day, Will. Just like you didn’t give up that day. You gave up long before we ever met.”

I didn't catch you. You surrendered.

He shifted his weight slightly where he straddled the younger man, heavy boots kicking out against the deck. *Thud, thud, thud.* He drew in a deep, snowy breath as he cast an even gaze out across the moonlit lake. The ice was cracking and, like blood, the water was black against the moonlight.

Hannibal turned his cat-like gaze, soft and wet, back down to Will.

“Reach for me, now.” It was not a question.

Will physically reached out, cold breaths puffing past his lips as he wrapped his good arm over Hannibal's shoulders, letting his truths sink into his skin like an extra layer, thickening him.

Hannibal took pause as Will finally reached. The agent could very well be reaching to save his own life, dangling another hook, but it was already made clear that life – this life – was of no worth to him.

Will was reaching for Hannibal.

I've never known myself as well as I know myself when I'm with him.

There were no facades here and no shiny veneers, there was just them, like this, shaking and cold as Will bled out, as always, in Hannibal's capable hands.

"We could... leave. Together,” Will rasped out, slowly, throat tight and bruised – swelling.

Love and death are the great hinges on which all human sympathies turn.

Closing his eyes, Hannibal turned his face into Will’s arm and inhaled sharply against his blood-stained shirt, taking in the scent of him, but also the warmth of the embrace – the togetherness. Without a word Hannibal wrapped both of his arms under Will’s and lifted him to stand, the younger man shaking and gasping through gritted jaw and clenched teeth. He kicked open the door, letting the light and the warmth wash over them. What was once blue, now was gold. Thawing had begun.

Keeping Will close, half carrying him, Hannibal walked him to the sofa and set him down. Once settled, Hannibal stood and examined this fairytale life that Will had constructed and how it was now shattered, stained with blood and sprayed with bullets. Holes blown through the log walls let him see clear to the darkness outside – the same holes let the cold creep in with steady streams of icy night air. Hannibal was grinning, head held high as he left for his car, before returning a short while later with a medical kit in-hand.

Stepping in front of Will, Hannibal's hellish gaze softened to take in the beautiful mess shuddering in front of him. He hitched up his trousers and lowered himself to the rough carpet underneath, dog hair and ash clinging to his clothes as Hannibal kneeled down in front of Will, between in thighs – where he perched, once again, to stitch him up.

Hannibal looked up, briefly, and stated matter-of-fact, "We were always together, Will. The choice to leave was always there and always your own."

An open door the cannibal couldn't shut.

Staying focused on the task ahead, the good surgeon carefully undid Will's shirt to bare the wound. Unable to resist, Hannibal lightly pressed the length of his palm against the gaping flesh and stole a hooded glance upwards.

Break for me.

This life was over – this life would end and Will could start another life with Hannibal, the way he had meant to do so, years ago. The way he *should* have.

"Here, now," Will whispered into the chilly room that told of the struggle that took place just before Hannibal had gotten there; splattered blood across the wooden shelves and broken glass windows – one of which, Will had been thrown from. Just beyond the broken glass door that led out back, the Dragon lay, motionless.

Will reached, again, and tugged on Hannibal's wool coat, bringing him closer. Will had never been attracted to a man before, but Hannibal was a first for a lot of things in Will, including this.

He pulled Hannibal into kiss, strange against his lips at first; the scruffy burn of their unshaven skin rubbing together, but the electric shock that shot through Will's spine deafened everything else that rolled through his mind, replacing it with the rush of blood and the thrumming of his pulse.

This was right.

Perfect.

Betrayal and forgiveness are... best seen as something akin to falling in love.

Hannibal pushed up on one knee as Will reached for him a second time. Never one to assume, Hannibal swallowed a mild dose of shock as their lips finally pressed against each other, his eyes closed as a long-held desire unfurled in him with licks of fire through his veins and bolts of light along his nerves, a low growl scratching at the back of his throat.

You cannot control, with respect, to whom you fall in love.

Hannibal felt Will tremble and his world trembled with it as their lips moved over one another. Things were coming together as quickly as they were coming apart – a mutual shattering coming together in gold.

Pushing up higher, he leaned Will back against the sofa and positioned one knee between his thighs, looming over him as Hannibal tilted his own head, cruel pout slotting neatly against soft lips. Lifting his hands to cup the line of Will's jaw, he kissed down, coaxing his mouth open as his tongue delved in to taste with a groan – he'd never dreamed that such a salty man would taste so sweet.

Taste and smell are the oldest senses and the closest to the center of the mind. Parts that precede pity and morality. They play in the dome of our skulls, like miracles illuminated on a church ceiling.

After a moment of wading in and drowning in the arms of the man who had been his obsession for years, Hannibal managed to pull back. Resting his forehead against Will's, Will panted out in little gasps as he struggled for air, taking in deep breaths of it as he gazed, wide-eyed, at Hannibal – amazed at even himself.

“As much I would quite like to keep kissing you, I would ask you to refrain from distracting me, momentarily,” Hannibal tutted, with a just a hint of a smile at Will.

With one fluid motion, he returned to his knees between Will’s legs.

This time, as hands swabbed over wounds and prepared to stitch, they moved with a slow and indulgent tenderness. Liberties never taken before, despite the regularity of this situation.

Kintsugi.

Every opportunity to touch the agent’s smooth chest was taken. Soft cotton brushed aside, fingertips stroking through caked blood to find caramel flesh that shivered with a lovely shade of innocence and need. Heated glances were stolen upwards to match - blood and water blooming into one. Identically different.

Will swallowed thickly, eyes darker with lust as he gazed at Hannibal, pale from blood loss, but flushed from the heated kiss they shared. Will had the look of a man with life breathed back into him; a glint in his blue eyes where lifelessness had been before. Will had never really lived, except when he had been with Hannibal, but those moments were never long and usually ended with Will on the wrong end of a knife.

"Apologies, doctor," he managed to get out, his head lolling back against the couch, stretching out his bruised throat as Hannibal worked diligently.

Hannibal returned his focus as the needle pushed through the first layer of skin, the thick thread following after as his arm shifted up and back with fluid motions, stitching his boy back together to his design with an easy grace. Although thoroughly delighted to hear and see life flowing through Will once again – and not just in the shade of blood flushing under flesh, but the pulses of spirit in and over his lips – Hannibal still spoke in plain tones.

“I do hope that apology is utterly false, Mister Graham.”

Hannibal glanced upwards with a raised eyebrow, hands working steadily. The wound was almost fully stitched and the agent's blood was already starting to dry and crack under the cannibal's fingernails.

But, when he was faced with the naked, bruised arch of Will's throat that worked in slow, sensual rolls of strained muscle as he swallowed thick bouts of desire – given the subtle permission granted by the previous kiss – it was all Hannibal could do not to lunge and maul the tender flesh there.

"Could be; I'm good at lying," Will muttered, swallowing roughly again, Adam's apple bobbing as he did so, his gaze cast to the ceiling as Hannibal pieced him back together again.

Hannibal hummed in response as he finished stitching and padding the wound with gauze, before finally dressing it. It would do, for now, but he would need more supplies soon.

Leaving his shirt open where it was and his own hands bloody, as they were, Hannibal resumed his position, looming over Will. Will's gaze dropped down again – onto Hannibal – eyes locking with the doctor's and their mouths hovering desperately close, as the erotic charge flitted between them.

"Indeed. Although, some things simply don't lie. Wouldn't you agree, Will?" Hannibal's long fingers threaded through dark, matted curls as lips hovered tantalizingly close.

Will could not deny the energy and magnetism between them, and pulled Hannibal over him, arm wrapping around his shoulders once again; breathing against his mouth, raggedly.

"Agreed."

As Will's arm looped over his shoulder and pulled him in, his thigh pressed against Hannibal's groin, rolling lightly. Hannibal clasped a hand over the back of Will's head, holding him just there as he pressed their lips together again. His expert tongue chased the agent's, lathing over the sweet, pink muscle – coaxing it out with hungry a groan. Hannibal's spare hand drifted down over the healthy side of the younger man's chest, exploring the taut

flesh – thumb pressing between ribs as fingers glancing over the hem of his jeans, firm palm gripping around his smooth flank.

Hannibal pressed himself down into Will, holding him firm against the sofa, as he offered up such deliciously needy sounds and writhing motions. A low moan escaped Will's chest; feral and wanton as it clung against Hannibal's mouth, their tongues sliding together seamlessly. He touched Hannibal's face with calloused fingers, as if memorizing how he felt, and Hannibal closed his eyes as he memorized the tender way in which Will petted over his face whilst he could feel the growing hardness against his leg. Holding his head in place, his hand moved to grip the agent's thigh and tug him up, bringing them closer again as their kisses grew more heated – all while Hannibal greedily sucked on Will's tongue, his hand stroking up and brushing over a peaked nipple.

Will had started to roll his hips into Hannibal's thick thigh when he heard the popping sound of tires over gravel and snow in the driveway, and froze.

There were not red and blue flashing lights – just the high beams of civilian car, and the familiar ticking of an engine.

Molly.

Wide blue eyes met Hannibal's as their mouths parted, and Hannibal's eyes narrowed menacingly.

Her.

With lust-blown gaze and panted breaths, Hannibal hadn't missed a beat. He retreated from Will, for now, and quickly did up the agent's shirt. Standing up, he brushed his coat down and hair back, before helping Will to his feet just as the door swung open.

Hannibal had no fear what Will would choose, but still – irritation threatened to form into a sneer at the interruption.

Rude.

Molly stood in the doorway. Walter was not with her, but she was covered in fresh snow that clung to her golden blond hair, casting a halo of sorts around her head as the light hit it just right. Will stared at her for a good, long moment as she stared right back, and then at Hannibal.

"I-I came back to make sure you weren't dead," she clambered, car keys still in her hand, fingers gripping them tightly as she looked between them, and then looked Will over – really looked him over.

"Will, you need a doctor-"

"I'm fine," Will cut her off, and her gaze flitted around the room to the signs of struggle, the bruises around Will's neck – large and fresh – before her icy-blue gaze settled, then, on Hannibal.

Hannibal sucked in a deep breath and exhaled through his nostrils, a distinct look of displeasure painted over his face as Will exchanged knowing glances with *her* . The thought that Will was taking a snapshot for his own memory palace was too much.

Hannibal took a step forward, placing himself between Will and Molly. He was careful to keep his hands clasped loosely in front.

“He has had sufficient medical treatment. Now that you have seen he is *not* dead.” Hannibal nodded to the door.

Molly’s gaze narrowed as Hannibal all but dismissed her. Ignoring him completely, she stepped forward with two hesitant steps, her boots leaving a wet trail behind.

“Will?”

Her voice tried to stay firm, but wavered at the last. It wasn't his physical health she was concerned with now. She stole another obvious glance around the room, the stains of carnage there, and then back to Hannibal.

"Fine?"

If I go... I'll be different when I get back.

Molly's pale brow furrowed, cupid-bow lips pursed, and her jaw jutted forward. She had been warned that he would be different – that he would change. He wouldn't be the man that she had married. She had not wanted to believe that, but as Will watched her, even around Hannibal, it was clear that it had been the only very-true thing he had ever said to her.

I won't.

Everything else had been half truths.

I prefer sins of omission to outright lies

Taking a step forward, Will moved around them both and grabbed keys from the coffee table – *his* keys, and then his coat. He paused, gazing at her; his sweet, sweet Molly, who had always been too good for him.

"Will, don't..."

Will shook his head; "Take care of the dogs."

You know, in my time I've seen people broken by the world. I've seen them broken in all kinds of hideous and offhanded ways, but never like this. Never like this.

Hannibal didn't move, or say a word – a statue chiseled in cold, resolute strength – nothing soft and malleable like *her.* He knew it wasn't his place to speak and, as Will spoke, it became clear that there was nothing to say.

When the fox comes running…

Have the lambs stopped screaming?

Hannibal had choked the old life out of Will, his hands still cramped with the shape of his breath. The thin lies had all unraveled and would not hold what they had shared here together any more. Hannibal had wanted to set Will free as much as he had wanted to position himself at the center of the younger man's world.

He had achieved both in a spectacular fashion.

The cannibal worked hard to maintain a cool expression under the weight of smugness that pressed in on him, especially as he gazed over Molly's shocked and gaping expression. Tears welled in her bright blue eyes as her hands started to shake. **Oh, my dear, too late for tears. Save them for your dogs**.

As Will gathered up his things, Hannibal scooped up the medical kit, slamming it shut and drawing Molly's attention to the stark white box with the red 'X' just so she knew exactly who would be attending to Will's care now.

Hannibal moved with smooth, almost feline grace to open the door that bit wider as he waited for Will and turned his full attention to Molly. Hannibal set a dark gaze and cut the air with sharp words.

"The dragon is dead. You will find his body out back. I am sure the authorities will be here soon enough. Be wise in what information you choose to impart, dear."

Be blind.

It would make little difference to Will and himself what she told the authorities; Jack would likely have already figured it out.

"Will, I'm your wife. Walter… what will I tell him?" Molly tilted her head, golden locks falling around her narrow shoulders as she sought an understanding. "On second thought if… if you're going to choose *him* over us, what we had – go. Walter deserves better than that."

Molly tossed the car keys down and slapped her hands against her thighs; giving up. Will had always been stubborn – always a secret mess, and she had never wanted to see it. He had never let her see it. She saw only what he had wanted her to see, and she took only what he offered in the guise that it was everything he had. Apparently not.

"It's tough to hold onto anything good. It's all so slippery." She whispered, watching him.

Watching Molly unravel was like pulling a thread from a favorite sweater, unaware that the whole thing was being held together by that one little string. He'd promised her a very good life – that he would care for her and Walter – that this life was over and he was never going back. He really was a good liar.

A great *actor.*

We construct fairy tales, and we accept them. Our minds concoct all sorts of fantasies when we don't want to believe something.

The love for strays was hardly enough reason to settle and hope that a good life would be all Will had ever wanted.

Swallowing hard, Will kicked her keys back to her as he passed, pausing to look at her round face and the curve of her neck, but everything looked so different now; like the shades had been lifted and now, Will only saw fragile human bones and blood – and life – ring squeezed out by his own two hands.

“Slick as hell,” Will whispered, touching the ring around his finger and twirling it for a moment, before he tugged it off.

He stepped in beside Hannibal and put the gold band down on the table by the door; his gaze on her was unapologetic, and he had to be if he wanted her to hate him enough to forget about him.

She and Walter deserved so much better.

Hannibal had watched the show with sheer delight as he tugged on his gloves. This show was primarily for Molly’s benefit, but as the slick, gold band was tossed down, his chin ducked and his lips curved up as he gave Molly a knowing look from under raised brow. **Careful little stray.**

All sorrows can be borne if you put them in a story.

She broke beautifully. Difficult to scramble for dignity when you realize everything you love is a lie. There was only one other person who broke more beautifully than *her* .

Where does the difference between the past and the future come from? Mine? Before you and after you.

Slipping out into the night, Will sighed as Hannibal closed the door silently behind them, something smashing right up against it from the other side, but he didn't look back – he cut himself off from her world, and allowed himself the freedom to drift back into Hannibal's.

It's dark on the other side, and madness is waiting.

The pine creaked under Hannibal’s sure footing, accentuated with the sounds of an old life shattering to dust. Hannibal paused at the stop of the stairs to raise himself up and steal a

glance at the full moon that hung indifferently, but all-knowing in the sky, casting its deathly-pale glow across the harsh landscape below. Trees, roads, houses – everything slipped easily into the shadow of night. Closing his eyes, he inhaled every aspect of this moment, before stepping down to follow Will's dark, icy tracks to the car waiting for them.

Placing his hand on Will's, he took the car keys in silence. They both got in, and Will buckled slowly, before lying back against the seats, freezing to the touch with arms over his chest to keep him warm. As the engine kicked over, Hannibal tugged on his seat-belt as well and waited for the car to heat up.

I felt like I killed her.

"You deserve better, too, Will." Hannibal's voice broke the silence between them and Will looked over at him, jaw clenching and unclenching, but said nothing.

Hannibal swiveled his head to look over *his* sweaty, pale, bloodstained agent in all his silence, but even Will's silence spoke louder than words.

"I'll wake you when we arrive."

Will's cool blue gaze watched Hannibal drive, still no word out of him, but after a long moment, Will settled in with eyes on the road, committing this very moment to memory – this very hour. Everything was changing. Will closed his eyes, listening to the hum of the road and the crunch of snow under tires.

All our destinies flying and swimming in blood and emptiness.

"Where are we going?"

Never ask. Spoils the surprise.

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!